

Alastair Walter writes:- "Seeing John Marriner's article in the December Bulletin reminded me of something similar that appeared in Bulletin 284 (Pg.5). This earlier piece by Tony Edwards concerned an Edward VII 6d with perfin and Govt. Parcels overprint. His comments on that stamp seem to apply equally to John Marriner's:

I fear this may be a forgery, being a perfinned stamp overprinted at a later date with a faked overprint, by a forger who did not understand the impossibility of such an item ... a faker who was not fully knowledgeable about the subject to be faked, being caught out by the use of a perfinned stamp amongst the (presumably) many that were faked.

If we assume that the overprint is a later addition, there is no mystery - a perfectly genuine perfin correctly used without overprint and faked later. This, of course, does not square with John Marriner's assertion that the postmark is over the overprint - but then how do you tell with any certainty which layer of black ink is on top of another? The small overprint "FAUX", which translates as "wrong" or "fake", is probably a dealer's mark, the like of which I have seen on other fakes or forgeries. This is simply the action of a reputable dealer selling the fake as such and preventing it from being passed off as genuine later. The stamp trade is of course international so the mark may quite easily be in French. Looking at the illustration (Ed:- my apologies for the very poor quality of the illustration in Bulletin 321) if the extra holes referred to are those on the left edge of the stamp, then surely they are just the tip of the oval overlapping from the next stamp, the perfin being rather too wide to be applied horizontally.

All the above is, of course, just a matter of opinion - it's hard to prove any of it either way!"